

Appl. No. 09/781,842
Reply to Office action of January 6, 2004

Remarks

The above-identified application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action mailed January 6, 2004, which included a final rejection of certain of the pending claims. Applicant submits that the amendments and remarks included herein show the present claims to be allowable. Therefore, applicant respectfully requests that this amendment be entered.

Claims 23-31, 33-42 and 44-53 were pending. By way of this response, claims 23, 29, 48, and 50 have been amended, and claim 30 has been cancelled without prejudice. Support for the amendments to the specification and the claims can be found in the application as originally filed, and no new matter has been added. Accordingly, 23-29, 31, 33-42 and 44-53 are currently pending.

In addition, applicant gratefully acknowledges the Examiner's holding that claims 38-42, 44, 45, and 47 are allowable, and that claims 24-31 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

As discussed herein, claims 23, 48, and 50 have been amended to include the subject matter of allowable claim 30. Claim 29 has been amended to read more clearly. Thus, applicant submits that all of the rejected claims have been amended to include the subject matter of allowable claim 30, all of the present claims are allowable.

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Claim Rejections

Claims 23 and 33-37 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Oshlack et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,472,712). Claims 46 and 48-53 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Oshlack et al. in view of Etani (U.S. Pat. No. 4,692,314).

As indicated above, claims 23, 48, and 50 have been amended to include the subject matter of allowable claim 30. The amendments to claims 23, 48, and 50 apply to the claims dependent therefrom. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections as they relate to the amended claims.

As acknowledged in the Office Action, applicant submits that Oshlack et al. alone, or in combination with Etani, does not disclose, teach or suggest the present invention. For example, Oshlack et al. taken alone, or in combination with Etani, does not disclose, teach, or even suggest the present compositions and methods which include a coating including a copolymer made up from units of a first monomer and a second monomer different than the first monomer, the units from the first monomer constituting about 45% to about 95% by weight of the copolymer and the units from the second monomer constituting about 5% to about 55% by weight of the copolymer, as recited in claims 23, 48, 50, and the claims dependent therefrom.

In addition, each of the present dependent claims is separately patentable over the prior art. For example, none of the prior art disclose, teach, or even suggest the present compositions and methods including the additional feature or

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features recited in any of the present dependent claims. Therefore, applicant submits that each of the present claims is separately patentable over the prior art.

In view of the above, applicant submits that the present claims, and in particular claims 23 to 29, 31, 33 to 37, 46, and 48 to 53, are unobvious from and patentable over Oshlack et al. taken alone, or in combination with Etani, under 35 U.S.C. § 103.

Claim Objections

Claims 24-31 have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

As indicated herein, independent claims 23, 48, and 50 have been amended to include the subject matter of allowable claim 30. Therefore, applicant submits the objections have been overcome.

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In conclusion, applicant has shown that the present claims are unobvious from and patentable over the prior art under 35 U.S.C. § 103. Therefore, applicant submits that the present claims, that is claims 23-29, 31, 33-42 and 44-53 are allowable, and respectfully requests the Examiner to pass the above-identified application to issuance at an early date. Should any matters remain unresolved, the Examiner is requested to call (collect) applicant's attorney at the telephone number given below.

Date: March 2, 2004

Respectfully submitted,



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